'Whitewash,' 'Inquest' Diminish Reputation of Warren Report

"Twenty-six volumes of testimony, depositions and exhibits like this would undercut the speculations of the Mark Lanes, Sauvages, Feldmans, Buchanans, et al. *The most insidious schemer in the world could hardly rig the statements of 552 witnesses. Let those who scoff at the report bury themselves for ten months in the monumental record. After that, if they persist in their skepticism, that's their privilege. May they add to the truth so long as it is the truth and not mere speculation."*

—Congressman Gerald Ford, member, Warren Commission.

Adding to the truth about the assassination of President Kennedy:

—"Whitewash: The Report on the Warren Report," by Harold Weisberg, published by Mr. Weisberg (Hyattstown, Md. 20734).

—"Inquest, the Warren Commission and the Establishment of Truth," by Edward Jay Epstein, introduction by Richard H. Rovere, scheduled for publication late this month by The Viking Press.

—"Rush to Judgment, a critique of the Warren Commission's Inquiry into the murders of President John F. Kennedy, Officer J. D. Tippit and Lee Harvey Oswald," by Mark Lane, with an Introduction by Hugh Trevor-Roper, scheduled for September publication by Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Says a major critic who has read the first two books and parts of Lane's: "All three are chopping at a rotten tree. All three diminish the reputation of the Warren Commission."

Mr. Weisberg has been a newspaper and magazine writer, an intelligence and political analyst, and an investigator for a sub-committee of the Education and Labor Committee. During the Kennedy administration, his "Geese for Peace" project—he is an expert on waterfowl—fostered basic agricultural help for newly emerging countries. He wrote "Whitewash" because he found

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gram in American government at Harvard. In the "Inquest" introduction, Mr. Rovere says that Mr. Epstein maintains —"and, I believe, amply demonstrates— that the 'quest for truth' was also a quest for domestic tranquility, that the second quest often got in the way of the first, and that in any case the pursuit was by no means as long and arduous as it should have been. . . . The Commission, being what it was and doing what it was doing, had the prestige of the entire United States to think about."

Notes Mr. Epstein: "There was a dualism in purpose. If the explicit purpose of the Commission was to ascertain and expose the facts, the implicit purpose was to protect the national interest by dispelling rumors. These two purposes were compatible so long as the damaging rumors were untrue. But what if a rumor damaging to the national interest proved to be true? The Commission's explicit purpose would dictate that the information be exposed regardless of the consequences, while the Commission's implicit purpose would dictate that the rumor be dispelled regardless of the fact that it was true. In a conflict of this sort, one of the Commission's purposes would emerge as dominant."

One of Mr. Epstein's observations: "It is true that the Commission found no

Warren Report leaves analysts only one alternative — to approve it, which no honest analyst could do.

It is not the author who showed Oswald could not have committed these crimes; it is the Commission, for there is nothing in my book not from its record. Hard as it tried to avoid anything tending to show Oswald could not have committed the crime, the Commission could not keep from its record substantial evidence that he did not. How it could accept without question or comment so much nonsense, fantasy, and outright perjury is beyond comprehension. Perhaps the answer is that these were honest men neither intellectually nor emotionally equal to the task set for them.

Lemming-like Quality

There is a lemming-like quality to the performance of the Commission. It is almost as though they sought the destruction of their Report. Throughout its record are dozens of places where they almost asked for this. The author believes members of the Commission have substantial doubts. He believes, for example, that the Senators who questioned Marina Oswald at that mysterious Sunday night hearing in September, 1964, when the Report had, for the most part, certainly been drafted, have serious doubts that were confirmed by her performance.

In its approach, operations and Report, the Commission considered one possibility alone — that Lee Harvey Oswald, without assistance, assassinated President Kennedy and killed Officer J. D. Tippit. Never has such a tremendous array of power been turned against a single man, and he was dead. Yet

be solved, it will be no credit to the police for what they have thus far done.

Above all, the Report leaves in jeopardy the rights of all Americans and the honor of the nation. When what happened to Oswald once he was in the hands of public authority can occur in this country with neither reprimand nor question, no one is safe. When the Federal government put its stamp of approval on such unabashed and open denial of the most basic legal rights of any American, no matter how insignificant he may be, then no American can depend on having these rights, no matter what his power or connections. The rights of all Americans, as the Commission's chairman said when wearing his Chief Justice's hat, depend upon each American's enjoyment of these same rights.

In writing my book I have had but one purpose. That was to show that the job assigned to and expected of the President's Commission on the Assassination of John F. Kennedy has not been done.

What now, then? One thing only — to do that job, do it well and completely, most of all honestly, regardless of the consequences. If foreign policy is involved, so be it. The crime *must* be solved. It certainly was not solved by accusing a convenient nobody in Dallas of it and then allowing him to be killed while in police custody.

Who *can* solve this crime? Not the courts, for there is no question that can be taken to court. Not the Commission, for it has already both failed and closed up, its work unfinished.

Only Congress remains. A Congressional investigation was one of the immediate considerations once Oswald was

the Warren Report" waiting and dissatisfactory. There can be no doubt that the most serious errors were made." He spent thousands of hours of study and analysis of the testimony and exhibits, and his book is based exclusively on the Commission's own information.

Before deciding last month to print the book himself, Mr. Weisberg had offered it to 63 publishers, 31 of whom "had so little interest in the subject matter they declined even to read the book."

Mr. Epstein is a graduate of Cornell University and is now in a doctoral pro-

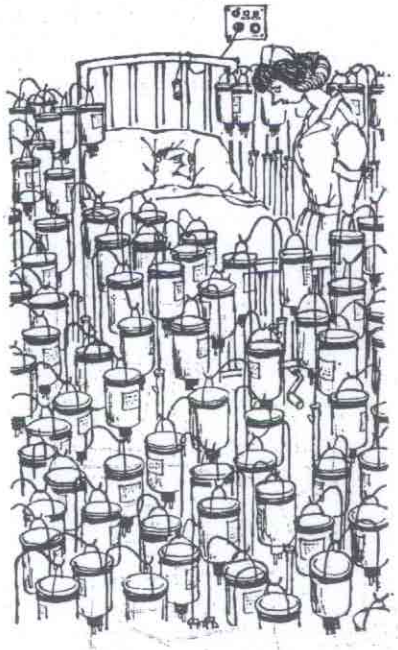
evidence that others were involved with Oswald in the assassination, but, as has been shown [in the book], the investigation was by no means exhaustive or even thorough. The question thus remains: How far did the Commission go in approaching the threshold question of a second assassin?"

Mr. Weisberg's analysis of the Warren Report resulted in the following conclusion:

By HAROLD WEISBERG

Proving Lee Harvey Oswald innocent of the charges against him was not the author's intention. However, the-

"Do you have a bag I can put his estate in?"



"Boy, I needed that!"

Jerome Beatty, Jr. says that he would be willing "to lay what reputation I have on the line and nominate Charles Rodrigues for the Funnyman's Hall of Fame right now. Rodrigues has the ability and the desire to avoid the cliche in cartooning. He splits your sides with a laugh and then causes you to reflect a moment on our pretensions." As they appear in "Spitting on the Sheriff and Other Diversions," a Fawcett Gold Medal collection of Rodrigues' drawings, here are examples of this funnyman's desire to avoid the cliche and split your sides with a laugh that then causes you to reflect a moment on our pretensions.

even without opposition the Commission failed. Not only did it fail to prove its case "beyond a reasonable doubt," the American concept, it created new doubts where none had existed.

Oswald's guilt or innocence is important in three areas: To solve, if it can now be solved, "the crime of the century"; to his survivors; and to the rights and honor of all Americans.

A crime such as the assassination of the President of the United States cannot be left as the Report of the President's Commission has left it, without even the probability of a solution, with assassins and murderers free, and free to repeat their crimes and enjoy what benefits they may have expected to derive therefrom. No President is ever safe if Presidential assassins are exculpated. Yet that is what this Commission has done. In finding Oswald "guilty," it has found those who assassinated him "innocent." If the President is not safe, then neither is the country.

'Most Monumental Botch'

To anyone with any experience in investigation or analysis, the most incredible part of the Commission's inquiry is its complete lack of question or criticism of the police. This Commission was satisfied with faulty and fallacious memory on an unimaginable scale; with the most amateurish pretense of an investigation; with "blunders" so consistent they may not have been accidental; and with a frameup so thinly covered it was naked. It just is not possible that the police are as incompetent as this record shows. The best and the kindest thing that can be said for them is that they created the most monumental botch in police annals. They did not solve the crimes, nor did they attempt to. They had one objective, to take the heat off themselves. With the wholehearted help of the Report, they succeeded. But they left an unsolved crime, the most important murder that can be committed in this country. If this crime can now

year, the President decided on a Commission which, at least in theory, was removed from politics. Congress then agreed. This, however, is not an election year. Even if it were, is there any place else to turn? Can we allow the crime to go unsolved, and accompanied by such a miscarriage of justice?

Unanswered Questions

There are today more unanswered questions about the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy than there were on February 3, 1964, when the Commission opened its hearings. In addition to those inherent in my book, here are some of the many questions which demand answering:

What was the reason for trying to bury the ghost so deeply? Restriction of access to the Commission's files for 75 years cannot be explained in terms of the interests of Oswald's daughters. Nothing that can now be said of their father can hurt them. Further revelations could only benefit them.

The whole story of the autopsy and the autopsy report — the suppressed pictures of the wounds, the "editing" of the autopsy, the autopsy records in contradiction of the artist's representation of the wounds, the Commission's reference to a "neck" wound when it was not in the neck.

Why?

Why did the Report suppress the testimony of the pathologists and experts in forensic medicine that the so-called "found" bullet could not have done what the Report attributed to it? How could it reach conclusions opposed to this expert testimony and not refer to this testimony?

Why did the staff misrepresent the tracing of this "found" bullet, alleging it had been proved to have come from Governor Connally's stretcher when this was not the case? And why was there no real effort to see how the bullet got under the mattress, a fact suppressed

(continued on following page)

'Commission Did Not Prove Case Against Oswald Beyond Reasonable Doubt'

(continued from preceding page)

in the Report?

Why did the Report suppress the fact that the "found" bullet had been cleaned before receipt in the FBI laboratories? Why did the FBI not analyze the organic traces left on the bullet? Why did the Commission not find out who first cleaned the bullet and why the FBI did not analyze the traces still remaining? Why, in fact, did the Commission remain mute on receiving this testimony?

Why?

Why did the Commission not trace and report on the laundering of Governor Connally's clothes, which destroyed evidence about his wounds?

Why did the Report suppress the Secret Service misrepresentation of Governor Connally's wounds, which had the effect of tailoring the evidence to suit the Commission's theory of the crime?

Why was the spectrographic evidence in effect suppressed? Why was the spectrographer, when called as a witness, never asked to testify about his spectrographic analysis of the presumed assassination bullets? Why is all of this not in the Report? With respect to the Tippit bullets, why was not similar analysis also made, and reported?

Why?

Why did the Report suppress proof that the empty rifle shells found on the sixth floor of the Depository Building had markings that could not have come from the C-2766 rifle?

How could the Report declare that this rifle, to the exclusion of all others, was in Oswald's possession at the time of the

Why was this suppressed in the Report?

Was perjury committed by important witnesses? If it was, why has the Commission done nothing about it?

Why did the competent staff of the Commission give such a puerile performance, avoiding the clearly pertinent and obvious questions? Why did they seek only to establish a prosecution-type case?

Why?

Why is the quality of the photographic reproductions in the Report consistently so poor? Why were important photographs reproduced so small their contents are masked when blank space was available for the same photographs to have been reproduced in larger size?

Why, of the many clear photographs of the assassination area that are available, did the Report use one of such poor quality it had to be touched up and still remained unclear? Why did the Report cover twice as much area as was necessary with this photograph, thus effectively reducing its legibility still further, and why did it print it in such a small space, leaving the rest of the page blank?

Why is there no photograph of the street level of the front of the building for the period immediately following the assassination? Why did the Report do nothing with the large amount of motion pictures showing this which were available to the Commission, especially when the photographer reported these pictures showed men going in and out of the building?

What happened to the Moorman picture?

Why?

Why are the important charts and maps on such a small scale they cannot

that led to the front entrance?

Why did the Report not consider Oswald was a possible "fall guy"? Why did the Commission make no serious inquiry along this line?

Why has the Report no forthright statement on Marina Oswald's status in the United States? Is she eligible for deportation? Have not others who similarly misinformed the government to enter the United States been deported?

Why?

Why is there no forthright statement in the Report of the nature and length of Marina Oswald's period of "protective custody"? Why does it not refer to the hints made to her by both the FBI and the Immigration and Naturalization Service that if she wanted to remain in the United States she would do well to "cooperate"? Was she not subject to pressure, and does not this affect her credibility?

Why did the Report suppress Marina Oswald's admitted lying? Why did it suppress her contradictory statements, using only what suited its purposes? Why did it suppress her admitted attempt at suicide?

Why did the Report avoid mentioning her considerable financial gain as a consequence of the assassination? Is she not a wealthy young woman today, and does this not affect her credibility?

Until these and all other questions, stated or implied throughout my book, are clearly, unequivocally and finally answered, the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and Officer J. D. Tippit are far from having been honestly

The Book That Shook Me Up

By JOHN AIMERS
(Montreal)

When I first read Fletcher Christian's "Unflinching: A Diary of Tragic Adventure," a Scottesque diary of slow death in the North, I was a teenager. Now, some years later, it is just as meaningful. When you examine an extraordinary narrative of courage such as this, your problems seem pitifully small and you know they could be easily salved—compared to the great magnitude of dilemmas that faced three starving explorers. Christian demonstrates the limits of human capability—and shows the magnificent structure of some human minds. This book, first published in England in 1937, gave me a big lift and a deep confidence in humanity—and it still does. It gives new insight into life; the insight is far more cheerful than many would believe.

An Invitation
An Invitation
An Invitation

What was the book that shook you up? What was the book that shook you up? What was the book that shook you up? That enlightened you, got you angry, or That enlightened you, got you angry, or That enlightened you, got you angry, or changed your life? Send us 150 words changed your life? Send us 150 words changed your life? Send us 150 words about your experience. BOOKS pays $5 about your experience. BOOKS pays $5 about your experience. BOOKS pays $5 for each account used. (No manuscripts for each account used. (No manuscripts for each account used. (No manuscripts can be returned.) BOOKS, 598 Madison can be returned.) BOOKS, 598 Madison

possession, to the exclusion of anyone else, when it cited no proof of any of these allegations?

Why did the Report avoid any reference to whether access to the Paine garage was available to others than Oswald?

Why?

Why did both the police and the FBI suspend their efforts to trace the sources of the ammunition allegedly fired in the rifle? Did it have anything to do with the discovery of large quantities of similar cartridges loaded with bullets other than the ones the Commission presumed were used?

Why did the Report ignore both the availability of other bullets and the aborted tracing of the ammunition? Why has the Report no information on any effort to trace the ammunition used in the Tippit killing to its source? Why does the Report contain no reference to the purchase of any ammunition of any kind by Oswald?

Why?

Why has the Report no copy of the medical or autopsy records on the murder of Officer Tippit, especially when the Commission had contradictory information about the number of shots and the number of wounds?

Why did the Report remain silent on the known destruction, mutilation, and manipulation of evidence?

When using so many different versions of the famous Altgens photograph as exhibits, why did the Report consistently suppress the right-hand side and its important contents?

Why did the Commission not question the various doctors about the material conflict in their testimony of the contents of the telephone calls to Parkland Hospital from the Naval Medical Center? Was there anything improper in these calls? Did the federal doctor tell the Dallas doctor the contents of the autopsy report, although denying he did?

[illegible] when measurement is important to an understanding of the contents?

Why is there no representation in the Report of the positions of the cars in the motorcade at the moment of the shooting?

Why did both the Commission and the FBI ignore the obvious existence of a "False Oswald"? What purpose or purposes could this man have had? Why is the fantastic story buried in the Report and treated out of context?

Why?

Why was the Commission so tolerant of the police and the incredible "mistakes" they made, their faulty memories, their botched investigation and their treatment of Oswald? Why, in fact, did the Commission not make a thorough investigation of the police?

How could the Commission and the Report ignore the manner in which Dallas public authority effectively denied Oswald his right to counsel of his own choice? Why did not the Commission examine these activities of the police and decide whether they could have had the purpose of preventing the impaneling of a jury or the introduction into evidence of Oswald's possessions?

Why did the Commission ignore the clear implications of Secret Service Inspector Kelley's report, that Oswald was being denied counsel to keep him from talking? Why was the Commission careful to avoid this when Kelley testified? Why did the Report not discuss this?

Why?

Why did the Report not address itself to the unreasonableness of an assassin in the sixth-floor window waiting for a very difficult shot at the President without need when he had such an excellent target and for a longer time as the motorcade approached the building?

If Oswald had been the assassin, why should he have gone into the cul-de-sac of the lunchroom on the second floor when the same door put him in a hall

the creation of the President's Commission and the publication of its widely heralded Report.

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